



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Backs Bill to Ban 'Spice'

PATTY RITCHIE March 13, 2012

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### **Experts Cite Dangers of "Party High" Drugs Declared Off-Limits by Fort Drum Brass**

State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced that she's signed on to sponsor a bill, drafted by Assemblyman Will Barclay, that would ban the sale in New York of "party high" drugs with names like "Spice" and "K2" that are widely sold over the counter on online, but recently declared off-limits by officials at Fort Drum.

"These synthetic products are marketed to young people as 'safe,' 'fun,' and 'legal,' but they have been shown to pose long-term dangers to the health of users and those around them," Senator Ritchie said. "In fact, one abuser told me that she mistakenly believed the products were safe because they weren't illegal, and she's now suffering the effects of that decision."

Multiple businesses in the Watertown area recently reported that they have been notified by Fort Drum officials that use of the products is "incompatible" with military service, and soldiers have been warned they face discharge if caught using them. The Army has already declared one local business off-limits to soldiers, and could expand that list to include others.

The FDA recently banned the use of several chemical compounds that are used to make the drugs, citing their ill effects, but marketers simply changed the formulas to get around the bans.

The Barclay-Ritchie bill (A.8913) takes a different tact, and targets any chemicals that are designed specifically to mimic the effects of marijuana on a person's brain.

Senator Ritchie said she was first asked to sponsor the bill by representatives of Credo, which provides drug and alcohol abuse treatment services in Oswego and Jefferson Counties.

"This issue has been of increasing importance over the last year, and we're thrilled to have this collaboration with Assemblyman Barclay and Senator Ritchie," said Jeanne M/ Unger, Executive Director of Credo's Farnham Family Services in Fulton. "This is going to have a tremendous, positive impact in our community."